



November 20, 2020

Office of Management and Budget

Delaware PTA understands that currently School Based Wellness Centers are funded through tobacco settlement money via the Health Fund Advisory Committee (HFAC). We know that these funds are not a permanent funding solution. All programs which receive funding from this source will need to begin to look elsewhere as this settlement money decreases over time.

Delaware PTA requests that a permanent funding solution be identified for School Based Wellness Centers. Long before COVID-19, Delaware PTA advocated for these centers and services. We know the value of these centers. Both Delaware PTA and National PTA understand that school based health care is necessary, especially for our most vulnerable populations who often do not have access to general practitioners and other healthcare providers. While school based wellness centers are useful for on site health care and sports evaluations for students, we also know these centers provide critical services needed for wraparound care for students in poverty. Delaware PTA supports these services because we know that if students are not healthy, they cannot learn. The services of Delaware's school based wellness centers are so important, especially for our youngest children in new elementary school based wellness centers.

Delaware PTA is extremely pleased with recent legislation limiting access to tobacco for those 21 and under. However, reductions in tobacco use and tobacco settlement funds should not affect funding for school based wellness centers. COVID-19 has underscored the importance of accessible health care for Delaware's most vulnerable students. Funding for school based wellness centers should not be a pass through cost and we request a permanent solution.

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